AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 18-57 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend the claims as follows:

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0 \le x1 \le 1$, $0 \le y1 \le 1$, $0 \le x1+y1 \le 1$, ~~($0 \le x1 \le 1$, $0 \le y1 \le 1$, $0 \le x1+y1 \le 1$)~~ formed on said buffer layer;

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0 \le x2 \le 1$, $0 \le y2 \le 1$, $0 \le x2+y2 \le 1$, ~~($0 \le x2 \le 1$, $0 \le y2 \le 1$, $0 \le x2+y2 \le 1$)~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor; and

a device layer made of gallium nitride group compound semiconductor formed on said second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer.

5. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0 \le x1 \le 1$, $0 \le y1 \le$, $0 \le x1+y1 \le 1$, ~~($0 \le x1 \le 1$, $0 \le y1 \le$, $0 \le x1+y1 \le 1$)~~ formed on said buffer layer; and

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0 \le x2 \le 1$, $0 \le y2 \le 1$, $0 \le x2+y2 \le 1$, ~~($0 \le x2 \le 1$, $0 \le y2 \le 1$, $0 \le x2+y2 \le 1$)~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor,

wherein said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer is formed into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern by etching.

6. (Previously Presented) A group III nitride compound semiconductor according to claim 4, wherein said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer is formed into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern by etching.

7. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0 \leq x1 \leq 1$, $0 \leq y1 \leq$, $0 \leq x1+y1 \leq 1$, ~~($0 \leq x1 \leq 1$, $0 \leq y1 \leq$, $0 \leq x1+y1 \leq 1$)~~ formed on said buffer layer; and

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0 \leq x2 \leq 1$, $0 \leq y2 \leq 1$, $0 \leq x2+y2 \leq 1$, ~~($0 \leq x2 \leq 1$, $0 \leq y2 \leq 1$, $0 \leq x2+y2 \leq 1$)~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor,

wherein said second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer is formed by lateral growth above said substrate-exposed portions.

8. (Previously Presented) A group III nitride compound semiconductor according to claim 4, wherein said second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer is formed by lateral growth above said substrate-exposed portions.

9. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0\le x1\le 1$, $0\le y1\le$, $0\le x1+y1\le 1$, ~~$(0\le x1\le 1, 0\le y1\le, 0\le x1+y1\le 1)$~~ formed on said buffer layer; and

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0\le x2\le 1$, $0\le y2\le 1$, $0\le x2+y2\le 1$, ~~$(0\le x2\le 1, 0\le y2\le 1, 0\le x2+y2\le 1)$~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor,

wherein said substrate comprises at least one of sapphire, silicon, and silicon carbide.

10. (Previously Presented) A group III nitride compound semiconductor according to claim 4, wherein said substrate comprises at least one of sapphire, silicon, and silicon carbide.

11. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0\le x1\le 1$, $0\le y1\le$, $0\le x1+y1\le 1$, ~~$(0\le x1\le 1, 0\le y1\le, 0\le x1+y1\le 1)$~~ formed on said buffer layer; and

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0\le x2\le 1$, $0\le y2\le 1$, $0\le x2+y2\le 1$, ~~$(0\le x2\le 1, 0\le y2\le 1, 0\le x2+y2\le 1)$~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor,

wherein said buffer layer comprises at least one of $Al_{x3}Ga_{1-x3}N$, wherein $0 \le x3 \le 1$, ~~($0 \le x3 \le 1$)~~ and $Al_{x4}Ga_{y4}In_{1-x4-y4}N$, wherein $0 \le x4 \le 1$, $0 \le y4 \le 1$, $0 \le x4+y4 \le 1$ ~~($0 \le x4 \le 1$, $0 \le y4 \le 1$, $0 \le x4+y4 \le 1$)~~, having an arbitrary composition ratio.

12. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0 \le x1 \le 1$, $0 \le y1 \le$, $0 \le x1+y1 \le 1$, ~~($0 \le x1 \le 1$, $0 \le y1 \le$, $0 \le x1+y1 \le 1$)~~ formed on said buffer layer; and

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0 \le x2 \le 1$, $0 \le y2 \le 1$, $0 \le x2+y2 \le 1$, ~~($0 \le x2 \le 1$, $0 \le y2 \le 1$, $0 \le x2+y2 \le 1$)~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor,

wherein said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer and said second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer ~~have the~~ comprise a same composition ratio.

13. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor according to claim 4, wherein said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer and said second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer ~~have the~~ comprise a same composition ratio.

14. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0\leq x1\leq 1$, $0\leq y1\leq$, $0\leq x1+y1\leq 1$, ~~($0\leq x1\leq 1$, $0\leq y1\leq$, $0\leq x1+y1\leq 1$)~~ formed on said buffer layer; and

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0\leq x2\leq 1$, $0\leq y2\leq 1$, $0\leq x2+y2\leq 1$, ~~($0\leq x2\leq 1$, $0\leq y2\leq 1$, $0\leq x2+y2\leq 1$)~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor,

wherein said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer ~~has~~ comprises a thickness of 500 Å to 2000 Å.

15. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor according to claim 4, wherein said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer ~~has~~ comprises a thickness of 500 Å to 2000 Å.

16. (Currently Amended) A group III nitride compound semiconductor comprising:

a substrate;

a buffer layer formed on said substrate into an island pattern comprising any of a dot pattern, a striped pattern, and a grid pattern such that substrate-exposed portions are formed in a scattered manner;

a first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x1}Ga_{y1}In_{1-x1-y1}N$, wherein $0\leq x1\leq 1$, $0\leq y1\leq$, $0\leq x1+y1\leq 1$, ~~($0\leq x1\leq 1$, $0\leq y1\leq$, $0\leq x1+y1\leq 1$)~~ formed on said buffer layer; and

a second group III nitride compound semiconductor layer $Al_{x2}Ga_{y2}In_{1-x2-y2}N$, wherein $0\leq x2\leq 1$, $0\leq y2\leq 1$, $0\leq x2+y2\leq 1$, ~~($0\leq x2\leq 1$, $0\leq y2\leq 1$, $0\leq x2+y2\leq 1$)~~ which causes epitaxial growth from at least an island ~~or islands~~ of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor serving as nuclei ~~(seeds)~~ so that said second group III nitride compound semiconductor keeps a gap to said substrate-exposed portions and connects adjacent ones of said first group III nitride compound semiconductor,

wherein said substrate-exposed portions are wider than said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer formed in an island pattern.

17. (Previously Presented) A group III nitride compound semiconductor, according to claim 4, wherein said substrate-exposed portions are wider than said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer formed in an island pattern.

18-57. (Canceled)

58. (New) The group III nitride compound semiconductor, according to claim 4, wherein said substrate-exposed portions comprise a thickness that is greater than a thickness of a region above said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer.

59. (New) The group III nitride compound semiconductor, according to claim 58, wherein said thickness of said substrate-exposed portions comprises a thickness of 1μm to 10μm.

60. (New) The group III nitride compound semiconductor, according to claim 58, wherein said thickness of said region above said first group III nitride compound semiconductor layer comprises a thickness of 1μm to 10μm.